

OP Trust and Advisory Council – New Members

We are delighted to welcome new members to the Oxford Philomusica's Trust and Advisory Council.

Suzy Webster has joined the Advisory Council, bringing extensive experience gained on both sides of the Atlantic. Suzy is a very successful fundraiser for both music and philanthropic causes, and has a track record of organising events and activities that make giving fun. Suzy has a deep knowledge of music and is particularly fond of opera.

We are delighted to welcome **Sir Robert Horton** to OP's Board of Trustees. Sir Robert is a Director of Emerson Electric and a member of its European Advisory Council. He has been Chairman of BP, Railtrack, Chubb and The Sporting Exchange and a Director of several other companies. He has been Chancellor of the University of Kent, Chair of the Tate Gallery Foundation and of Business in the Arts, and he has also been an active supporter of the Bodleian Library and a Trustee of the Cleveland Orchestra.

How the West was Won

Keynotes readers will remember the keen anticipation felt throughout the Philomusica ranks last April as the Orchestra prepared to make its debut in the then unknown territory of Swindon. The combination of an inviting programme and accommodating ticket prices proved irresistible to Swindon's music lovers with the result that the Orchestra found itself playing to a nearly full and totally captivated house. The subsequent anecdotal feed-back from the public was particularly gratifying – not least those members of the audience clamouring for a full Philomusica season.

After a flurry of negotiation and discussion, as the new season's brochure announces, the Orchestra has agreed a three concert partnership with the Wyvern Theatre. The establishment of this first 'out-of-Oxford' residency represents an important early step along the hard and rocky road to creating a permanent regional circuit of selected venues, and we are delighted to announce that the journey has got off to a flying start thanks to the generous sponsorship of BMW. Orchestra supporters are encouraged to attend any or all of these events by calling the Wyvern Theatre Box-Office on 01793524 481.

Friends Evening

Our next Friends' Evening will take place on Friday 31 October at the Haldene Room, Wolfson College, Linton Road, Oxford OX2 6UD and will follow the familiar format of drinks on arrival at 7pm, a musical interlude at 7.45pm, and dinner with wine and coffee at 8.45pm.

On this occasion the musical interlude will be performed by Joe Atkins, Oxford Philomusica's Principal Trumpet, accompanied by Annabel Thwaite.

Tickets for this event at £30 are available on 0870 60 60 804 or at vanessa@oxfordphil.com.

New Appointment

We have the pleasure of announcing the new appointment of Alice Hyland, a recent music graduate from Brasenose College. Taking on the role of Operations Administrator, she will be assisting us in the London office with a variety of tasks, including ticket sales and liaising with students.

PLAYER PROFILE

Helen Pitstow violin



Helen Pitstow was clearly always destined for a musical career, beginning violin studies during her childhood in Saffron Walden, continuing through a Youth Service Scholarship, and finally, studying at the Royal Academy of Music with the legendary Emmanuel Hurwitz.

After a distinguished student career, during which she won, amongst other prizes, the Principal's Award for Orchestral Playing, Helen spent the next three years sampling the delights of the free-lance orchestral world – both 'ancient and modern' – before taking up a position with English National Opera.

After serving sixteen years in the pit, fourteen as sub-principal second, Helen re-emerged into the daylight in 1999 to resume her free-lance career with numerous orchestras. Happily, amongst these was the Oxford Philomusica, with whom she has enjoyed permanent membership since 2005, and where working with John Georgiadis has been an unexpected bonus, having been tutored by him in Essex Youth Orchestra.

Helen is married to former Oxford academic Robin Rees, and lives near Oxford where she now combines selective orchestral playing with a second career as a much sought-after string teacher.

Keynotes

The Newsletter of

Oxford Philomusica

Oxford's Professional Symphony Orchestra
in Residence at the University of Oxford



Autumn 2008, Issue 9

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10th Anniversary Season

Even allowing for the well-known fact that time flies when you're enjoying yourself it seems scarcely believable that the Oxford Philomusica is ten years old this year. An auspicious Barbican debut in November 1998 quickly led to the Orchestra's present dominant position in the musical life of Oxford, and its unique status as the first ever Orchestra in Residence at the University of Oxford.

Amongst many artistic milestones along the Philomusica's first decade, Keynote readers may well remember a triumphant appearance at the Athens Megaron, (DATE?) and the extraordinary year-long Mainly Mozart Festival in 2006, but should also be aware of the Orchestra's enviable outreach programme – coaching University student composers and instrumentalists, mentoring the fledgling Blackbird Leys Choir, the Young Artists' Platform of pre-concert recitals, and maintaining a constantly evolving programme of work in schools, hospitals and community centres.

Far from resting on its laurels, the Oxford Philomusica marks the start of its second decade with an ambitious programme of expansion, as will be seen from the our new brochure. The highlight of the Oxford Autumn Season is a pianistic and conducting tour de force as Marios Papadopoulos plays and directs the five piano concertos and nine symphonies of Beethoven – all within the space of a three week Festival in November.

2009 is an annus mirabilis of anniversaries. Purcell and Handel, Mendelssohn and Martinu are just some of the candidates for celebration, but pride of place – not least in Oxford – must surely go to Joseph Haydn, whose bicentenary we will be marking with an imaginative, rolling festival – Dr Haydn, Friends, Forbear and Followers. Before then we will have encountered the madness of Medea and the trial and triumph of Tchaikovsky, savoured the splendours of the Banqueting House, been invited to the Ball, and embarked on an exploration of the symphonies of Brahms.

Beyond Oxford, the Philomusica will be developing its regional presence with a newly established residency in Swindon, and raising our national and international profile fulfilling a touring schedule which will take us to the Lake District, Scandinavia and the United States.

Make sure to book all your tickets for the Orchestra's series by calling the box-office now on 0870 60 60 804.

Lest We Forget



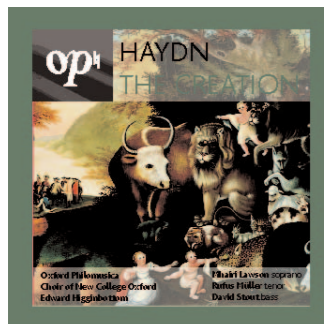
On 11th November at Christ Church Cathedral, the Oxford Philomusica has the honour to present an evening of music and readings to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the ending of the First World War. The responsibility of remembrance is, of course, not to be undertaken lightly, and the programme has been devised to lighten the solemnity of the occasion with a popular touch. John Rutter's Requiem represents a successful fusion of these twin qualities and, under the direction of the composer, forms the centrepiece of this very special evening.

Fundraising Event

The Banqueting House on Whitehall was built for the entertainment of kings, and we promise to do it full justice on 19 March 2009 when we celebrate our 10th anniversary in style with a fundraising concert and dinner. One of the Royal Palaces, the Banqueting House was completed in 1622 to a revolutionary design by Inigo Jones, and is one of the earliest examples of Palladian architecture, inspired by the buildings of ancient Rome. It replaced an earlier structure which had witnessed the marriage negotiations of Elizabeth 1 and Thomas Wolsey's downfall under her father, Henry VIII.

The dinner will be held in the Main Hall, against the magnificent backdrop of the Rubens ceiling. We can promise you the finest of music, dining and company and unforgettable evening. Places are limited so book early to make sure of your place.

The Creation Continued



In the April Newsletter we announced the completion of a cherished project to record Haydn's masterpiece, *The Creation*, with New College Choir. In the intervening weeks and months we have come to realise that we are in possession of a benchmark recording which should find a space on the shelves of all serious record collectors and music lovers. Moreover, it goes without saying that the new recording will be an invaluable asset in our efforts to make friends and influence people in the cut-throat competitive world of national and international touring. Indeed, even in their raw unedited state, sample tracks from the recording have already found an approving audience in the offices of a number of agencies.

The general release date is...when world-wide distribution will be undertaken by Discovery Records. However, Friends of the Orchestra and Keynote Subscribers can avail themselves of a copy after DATE and at a reduced price of £12. Please call our office to order your copy stating "Keynote Special".

Piano Festival 10th Anniversary



Last April's edition of Keynotes looked forward to an exceptionally spectacular Piano Festival and the 10th Anniversary programme fulfilled and surpassed all expectations.

With so much talent on show it may be invidious to even try to select highlights but some events stood out at least for this listener. Amongst the recitals, the seemingly tireless virtuosity of the familiar and much-loved figure of John Lill, dispatching countless notes from Beethoven, Schumann, Chopin and Prokofiev, and the long-awaited appearance of Festival President Andras Schiff, bringing his unique insight to bear on the music of Bach and Beethoven will live long in many memories.

The Orchestra played an unusually prominent part this year – quite stealing the show at an all-Russian night with an impassioned and compelling performance of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony, before going on to demonstrate equal mastery of the tangos of Piazzola and the terrors, both technical and allegorical, of James MacMillan, under the inspiring direction of the mercurial Joanna MacGregor. Earlier in the week, an evening of chamber music had served to remind us of the pedigree of the OP principals as they joined Artistic Director Marios Papadopoulos – here 'first amongst equals' for a beautifully paced programme of historically sequential Piano Trios.

Of course, the Piano Festival is much more than a performance showcase and its Academy programme of all-day masterclasses lies at its core. A characteristic session was the spell-binding 45 minutes Marios Papadopoulos spent with a gifted student, teasing out the choreographic rhythmic underpinnings and 'orchestral' textures of Petrushka one Sunday morning at the JdP.

The next Piano Festival is scheduled for 26 July to 2 August 2009 and the dates should be entered into the diaries of all who care about music and music education – regardless of whether they play the piano.

The Magic Flute - 'Singing Together'

Led by Magdala Opera Trust singers in conjunction with Oxford Philomusica musicians, the Singing Together Project, culminated in a performance of 'The Magic Flute' in April 2008. In special brainstorming workshops with the children and singers, OP musicians were on hand to improvise and lend their expertise to each scene as it was being created. The final concert featured children and musicians performing together their original work, interspersed with real scenes from Mozart's opera.

Magdala is a community based musical organisation dedicated to providing musical training and performance opportunities for singers, including adults and young people of all backgrounds and abilities. The children at the Mulberry Bush School are seriously disturbed, uncooperative, and withdrawn with limited attention spans. Under the inspired leadership of Magadala singers supported by OP musicians, these children were able to sing with enthusiasm and participate in a continuous one and a half hour performance.

The Singing Together Project, funded by Youth Music and the OP, brought together groups of children and teachers from 3 very different Oxfordshire schools; the Mulberry Bush School, Standlake C of E Primary School and the Oxford Community School. Scenery and costumes were made by pupils attending the Art Room, an Oxford-based charity for challenged 7-15 year olds using art to increase self-esteem, self-confidence and independence.

The Mulberry Bush School in Standlake, Oxon, provides an intensive programme of residential care, psychotherapy and education for psychologically damaged children from all over the UK, aged 5 to 12. Standlake School is a neighbouring mainstream rural primary school keen to build on its existing strong community link with the Mulberry Bush School. The Oxford Community School is a comprehensive school and Business Enterprise Specialist College of 1100 pupils, located in a deprived area of East Oxford.

A Chronicle of the First Ten Years

1998	the orchestra is founded by Marios Papadopoulos and makes its debut at the Barbican Centre, London, under his direction. Vladimir Ashkenazy becomes the Orchestra's Patron	2002	the Orchestra's 'Music for Oxford Hospitals' project is launched
November		July	
1999	Oxford Philomusica Chorus is founded by Andrew Stewart and performs with the Orchestra at their debut in Oxford	October	Oxford Philomusica is appointed the first ever Orchestra in Residence at The University of Oxford
February		2003	the Orchestra performs at Kensington Palace in the presence of HRH Prince Michael of Kent
	the Orchestra goes on its first European tour to Switzerland	March	
April	the Orchestra appoints the American composer George Tsontakis as its composer-in-residence and gives the European premiere of his <i>Perpetual Angelus</i> in Oxford	April	members of the Oxford Philomusica perform at the Ritz in the presence of HRH The Duke of York
	the Orchestra launches its Chamber Music Series featuring British contemporary composers. Works by Jonathan Harvey, Gordon Crosse, George Benjamin, Michael Berkeley and Howard Skempton, many in first performances, are presented in Oxford	May	the Orchestra performs with Patron Vladimir Ashkenazy at St James's Palace in the presence of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh
May	members of the Oxford Philomusica perform at Kensington Palace in the presence of HRH Princess Alexandra	July	Oxford Philomusica receives major funding from 'Youth Music' for its 'Music for Oxford Hospitals' project
August	the Orchestra presents the first Oxford Philomusica International Piano Festival, described by the <i>Oxford Times</i> as "the most significant annual musical event in the city"	August	The Rt Hon Lord Patten, CH, Chancellor of The University of Oxford, becomes the Oxford Philomusica's Honorary President
October	the Orchestra launches its "Orchestral Apprenticeship" scheme with the University of Oxford's Music Faculty to train students in orchestral playing	2004	Oxford Philomusica establishes an annual Viennese Ball in Oxford
December	Oxford Philomusica Trust becomes a registered charity	January	
2000	Oxford Philomusica performs at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall	January	Oxford Philomusica establishes an annual fund-raising event in the Palace of Westminster with a concert in the House of Commons followed by dinner in the Lords
February		July	The Oxford Philomusica appears at the prestigious Athens Festival prior to the Olympics
March	Oxford Philomusica makes its debut at the Salle Gaveau in Paris	November	Oxford Philomusica performs at the Bridgewater House, London, in the presence of HRH The Prince of Wales
July	Oxford Philomusica appoints an Advisory Council of distinguished individuals living in the Oxfordshire area	2005	Alfred Brendel KBE becomes the Piano Festival's Honorary Patron
September	the Orchestra's Outreach Programme commences with a project at the Barton Community Centre	October	András Schiff becomes the Piano Festival's Honorary President
2001	the Orchestra's Educational Schemes continue with a major project at Wood Farm subsequently funded by Oxford City Council	November	The University of Oxford extends the orchestra's residency for a further period of five years to 2012
January		December	Oxford Philomusica gives the first professional performance in Oxford of Wagner's <i>Die Walküre</i>
February	Patron Vladimir Ashkenazy appears for the first time with the Oxford Philomusica as pianist and conductor in a concert at the Apollo Theatre	2006	on 27th of January, Mozart's 250th birthday, the Oxford Philomusica launched its Mainly Mozart Festival, a series of 27 concerts throughout 2006
November	the Orchestra launches its University College Series with a concert at St Catherine's College	March	Oxford Philomusica performs at Blenheim Palace in the Churchill Memorial Concert
December	the Orchestra presents a series of concerts in Oxford as part of Japan 2001 - a nationwide series of events celebrating Japanese culture	October	Oxford Philomusica makes its debut at London's Cadogan Hall
	Oxford Philomusica Orchestra & Chorus perform Bach's <i>Christmas Oratorio</i> as part of an international Bach Symposium organized by the Tureck Bach Research Foundation	2007	Oxford Philomusica wins the Oxfordshire Business Award for its work in the community
2002	Oxford Philomusica is honoured at 10 Downing Street with a reception hosted by Cherie Blair	June	
April		September	Oxford Philomusica forms a partnership with Oxfordshire County Council to help young musicians in the area
		2008	Oxford Philomusica makes its debut at the Wyvern Theatre, Swindon
		April	Oxford Philomusica makes its first recording in a performance of Haydn's <i>Creation</i> with New College Choir Oxford

